

WORK SESSION OF THE GREENBELT CITY COUNCIL held Wednesday, March 7, 2012, for the purpose of meeting to review the Greenbelt Metro Area Sector Plan.

Mayor Davis started the meeting at 8:05 p.m. It was held in the Multi-Purpose Room of the Greenbelt Community Center.

PRESENT WERE: Councilmembers Konrad E. Herling, Emmett V. Jordan, Leta M. Mach, Silke I. Pope, Rodney M. Roberts and Mayor Judith F. Davis. Mr. Putens arrived later in the evening.

STAFF PRESENT WERE: Michael P. McLaughlin, City Manager; Celia Craze, Director of Planning and Community Development; Terri Hruby, Assistant Director of Planning; Jaime Fearer, Community Planner and David E. Moran, Assistant City Manager.

ALSO PRESENT WERE: Chad Williams, M-NCPPC; Kap Kapistan, Beltway Plaza and Thomas X. White, News Review

Mr. Williams summarized the meetings that had been held to date. He noted there were three concepts: High Office/GSA scenario, City staff scenario and baseline scenario. He indicated that MNCCPC staff was formulating its presentations for the meeting on March 15. Mr. Williams described the various scenarios.

Mr. Jordan indicated that the sector plan was a blueprint for the future. Mr. Williams responded that the time horizon was 2035-2040.

Mr. Roberts asked about the housing mix at Franklin Park. Mr. Williams responded that the vision was a for sale and rental mix at different price points.

Mr. Herling asked about daytime population. Mr. Williams estimated 35,000 in 2040.

Mr. Jordan asked if the plan considered transportation impacts. Mr. Williams responded that they constantly looked at impacts and based on modeling, they can determine what transportation improvements are necessary.

Ms. Mach asked what happens to Franklin Park in the baseline scenario. Mr. Williams responded that Franklin Park and Beltway Plaza remain as is. Under the high office scenario, he indicated Franklin Park would redevelop and Beltway Plaza could increase office and residential.

Mr. Jordan asked about the Belle Point community. Mr. Williams responded that this neighborhood would remain R-T (townhouse) zoning.

Mr. Herling asked if the models for transportation improvements considered transit. Mr. Williams responded that they looked at transit as well as bike/pedestrian needs.

There was discussion about connectivity and other issues on Greenbelt Road. Mr. Williams

indicated that they were looking at a number of options including road diet (reducing lanes), street trees, sidewalks on both sides, bike lanes, etc. Mr. Herling asked about separate bus lanes. Mr. Williams did not believe the demand was there for dedicated bus lanes.

Ms. Mach asked if they would look at school capacity. Mr. Williams indicated they would do this in the future.

Next, there was discussion of the City staff proposal. Ms. Craze presented the proposal. The only change she saw for Greenway Center was infill in Maryland Trade Center. She noted that when this occurs, the City would look to green the parking lot and improve pedestrian connections. Mr. Roberts believed that strong storm water management regulations were necessary.

Looking at Greenbelt West, Franklin Park would keep its existing use. Beltway Plaza would need to be redeveloped as a whole and include residential and office. She noted that under the GSA tenant scenario there would be increased density in Franklin Park.

Mr. Jordan asked about infill at Golden Triangle. Ms. Craze believed infill would be difficult because the sites are so small.

Ms. Craze noted recommendations to discontinue industrial uses on Branchville Road. She also reported a recommendation to improve the intersection at Lakecrest and 193. She stressed the City's opposition to the extension of Breezewood Drive and the widening of Cherrywood Lane.

Mr. Jordan believed there should be more open/green space or recreational amenities in Greenbelt East. He suggested improvements to the stormwater management pond at Ora Glen. Mr. Putens agreed there could be improvement. Mayor Davis favored the current natural features of the pond.

Mr. Kapistan referenced his March 7 letter regarding the Sector Plan. He indicated that rental rates had been reduced at the Mall due to the economic downturn. He reported that the mall had started a façade renovation. Mr. Kapistan requested flexibility and no rigidity when City considers plans for Beltway Plaza. He suggested a "shop locally" campaign. There was considerable discussion about the future of Beltway Plaza.

Mr. Williams suggested the City not take a position. Ms. Craze suggested the Council provide parameters to guide City staff. Ms. Craze expressed concern about the underlying plan giving Franklin Park vested rights for 5,800 units. It was suggested that advice from the City Solicitor was needed on this matter.

Information Items

Council approved the use of the City's logo for a quilt by the Prince George's African American Museum. Ms. Mach suggested a co-op month proclamation sooner rather than October due to the International Year of Cooperatives.

The meeting ended at 10:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*David E. Moran
Assistant City Manager*